

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10
CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 SS-15 SP-02 NSC-05 L-03
AID-05 OIC-02 EB-08 HA-05 /122 W
-----061966 172342Z /23
R 171920Z JUL 78
FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2203
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 GENEVA 10996

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: UNHCR, ECOSOC
SUBJECT: 1978 SUMMER ECOSOC - PROJECTED ENLARGEMENT
OF UNHCR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

REF: (A) STATE 167512; (B) GENEVA 10279, (C) GENEVA 10194

1. FOLLOWING AS THE LAST PARA. IS THE TEXT OF THE DRAFT
PROPOSAL CALLING FOR ENLARGEMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMIT-
TEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES.

2. THE TEXT CALLS FOR AN EXPANSION BY UP TO NINE ADDIT-
IONAL MEMBERS WHICH WOULD BRING THE TOTAL MEMBERSHIP TO
FORTY. IT APPEARS THAT THE DELEGATIONS OF THE NETHERLANDS
AND SWEDEN DECIDED TO GO AHEAD WITH THIS SIGNIFICANT EN-
LARGEMENT RATHER THAN THE LIMITED ONE IN SPITE OF MISGIV-
INGS AND OBJECTIONS VOICED BY MEMBERS OF THE WESTERN
GROUP, INCLUDING THE US, UK AND AUSTRALIA. THE UK AND
AUSTRALIAN POSITIONS ARE NEARLY PARALLEL TO OURS, WITH BOTH
AGREEING ONLY RELUCTANTLY TO THE EXPANSION TO NINE WHILE
PREFERRING A MORE LIMITED MOVE. BOTH ALSO AGREE WITH OUR
VIEW THAT OPENING UP THE ISSUE OF REPRESENTATION ON
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THE COMMITTEE WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY LEAD TO DEMANDS FOR
MORE EQUITABLE GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION AS OVER HALF THE
CURRENT MEMBERS ARE WESTERN. FURTHER, THIS COMMITTEE AP-
PEARS TO BE THE ONLY UN BODY ON WHICH THE MEMBERS SERVE
UNLIMITED TERMS. (THE TERM OF OFFICE OF MEMBERS WAS
LAST CONFIRMED IN ECOSOC RESOLUTION 965 B (XXXVI) 25 JULY
1963). WE FEAR THAT THE ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS WILL SERVE

TO HIGHLIGHT THIS SITUATION AND LEAD TO DEMANDS FOR ROTATIONAL MEMBERSHIP. THE DUTCH HAVE LISTENED PATIENTLY AND RESPECTFULLY TO THESE VIEWS BUT CLAIM THE NEW HIGH COMMISSIONER FEELS THIS MOVE IS NECESSARY IN VIEW OF THE STRONG PRESSURES FOR AN INCREASE IN THE COMMITTEE. IN RESPONSE TO OUR INQUIRIES, THE DUTCH HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO IDENTIFY THE SOURCE OF THIS PRESSURE, NOR HAVE WE BEEN ABLE TO DETERMINE WHICH AFRICAN DELEGATIONS ARE DEMANDING SEATS ON THE COMMITTEE.

COMMENT:

3. IF THE DEPARTMENT BELIEVES IT WOULD BE IN OUR INTEREST WE CAN CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR A MORE LIMITED ENLARGEMENT, ALTHOUGH IT WOULD PROBABLY BE NECESSARY TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE DIRECTLY WITH HARTLING, AS THE DUTCH AND THE SWEDES ARE PRIMARILY ACTING ON BEHALF OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER RATHER THAN ON THEIR OWN INITIATIVE. WE CONTINUE TO HAVE SERIOUS RESERVATIONS AS TO THE WISDOM OF THIS PROJECT IN TERMS OF THE EFFICACY OF THE EXCOM. IN ADDITION TO BEING UNABLE TO IDENTIFY THE SOURCE OF THE "PRESSURE" FOR THE MOVE, WE FAIL TO SEE THAT IT WOULD STRENGTHEN THIS BODY AND, IN FACT, PERCEIVE A SERIOUS DANGER THAT IT MIGHT DIFFUSE AND WEAKEN IT, AND LAY IT OPEN TO POLITICAL WRANGLING. THEREFORE, EVEN BEYOND PURELY US INTERESTS ASPECTS CITED ABOVE, WE CONSIDER THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE PROJECT HARBORS HAZARDS FOR THE ORGANIZATION ITSELF.

END COMMENT.

4. WE WOULD APPRECIATE DEPT RESPONSE TO TEXT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AS THE ITEM IS NOW SCHEDULED FOR DISCUSSION ON JULY 21, FRIDAY.

QUOTE: THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

RECALLING ITS RESOLUTION 1166 (XII) OF 26 NOVEMBER 1957, WHICH PROVIDED FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME, AS WELL AS ITS RESOLUTIONS 1958 (XVIII) OF 12 DEC 1963 AND 2294 (XXII) OF 11 DEC 1967, WHICH PROVIDED FOR SUBSEQUENT INCREASES IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME;

BEARING IN MIND THE INTEREST IN THE WORK OF THE OFFICE OF THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES AND THE RANGE OF REFUGEE PROBLEMS CONFRONTING THE OFFICE;

NOTING THAT THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME HAS AT PRESENT A MEMBERSHIP OF 31 STATES MEMBERS OF THE UN OR OF ANY OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES;

DECIDES TO INCREASE THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME BY UP TO NINE ADDITIONAL MEMBERS;

REQUESTS THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL, AT ITS FIRST REGULAR SESSION, 1979, TO ELECT UP TO 9 ADDITIONAL

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ACTION IO-14

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CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 SS-15 SP-02 NSC-05 L-03
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MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME ON THE WIDEST POSSIBLE GEOGRAPHICAL BASIS FROM THOSE STATES WITH A DEMONSTRATED INTEREST IN, AND DEVOTION TO, THE SOLUTION OF THE REFUGEE PROBLEM.
VANDEN HEUVEL

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